

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NICOSI 02228 310948Z
ACTION SS-15

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 8242
INFO AMEMBASSY ANKARA
AMEMBASSY ATHENS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NICOSIA 2228

FOR COUNSELOR NIMETZ FROM AMBASSADOR

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: OVIP, PEPR, CY, US
SUBJECT: NIMETZ VISIT: PUBLIC RELATIONS ASPECTS

1. PREMATURE LEAK TO LEFTIST PRESS OF YOUR VISIT FOLLOWED BY PIO CONFIRMATION WITHOUT PRIOR CONSULTATION WITH EMBASSY OR CONCURRENT RELEASE OF USG STATEMENT, WHICH WOULD HAVE HELPED SET TONE, HAS MADE IT EASY FOR GREEK CYPRIOT PRESS TO GIVE ERRONEOUS AND UNHELPFUL INTERPRETATION OF YOUR VISIT AND TO RAISE UNREALISTIC EXPECTATIONS. PRESS IS GIVING GREAT WEIGHT TO VISIT, SOME PAPERS EQUATING IT WITH A "CLIFFORD LEVEL" OR SPECIAL PRESIDENTIAL EMISSARY VISIT AND EVEN IMPLYING IT IS ACTUALLY A CONTINUATION OF THE FEBRUARY 1977 CLIFFORD MISSION. SOME PRESS COMMENT HAS IMPLIED THAT VISIT REPRESENTS LAST CHANCE OF US TO PLAY A USEFUL ROLE IN THE CYPRUS PROBLEM AND FULFILL ITS OBLIGATIONS TO FINDING A JUST SETTLEMENT. THIS THEME HAS BEEN ESPECIALLY EVIDENT IN MODERATE RIGHT-WING PRESS, WHICH IS USUALLY MORE FAVORABLY DISPOSED TOWARD U.S.; EVEN THIS SEGMENT OF PRESS HAS ONLY RELUCTANTLY AGREED THAT YOUR VISIT, OR ANY U.S. INITIATIVE, MIGHT HAVE MERIT. IN ANOTHER VEIN, SOME PAPERS HAVE SUGGESTED

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NICOSI 02228 310948Z

THAT YOUR VISIT MERELY REPRESENTS PRETEXT OF WHICH PRESIDENT CARTER WILL BASE CERTIFICATION TO CONGRESS REQUIRED FOR LIFTING THE ARMS EMBARGO.

2. WHILE WE CANNOT REALISTICALLY EXPECT TO CHANGE SELF-SERVING TREATMENT OF YOUR VISIT BY HIGHLY POLITICIZED PRESS, WE ARE WORKING WITH PIO TO TRY TO CONTAIN HOSTILE REACTION. IN AD-

DITION, WE BELIEVE IT WOULD BE HELPFUL TO TAKE POSITIVE ACTION AIMED AT DISARMING CRITICS AND HOSTILE PRESS.

3. WE BELIEVE, IN LIGHT OF PRESS TREATMENT SINCE THE LEAK, THAT ANY EXTRAORDINARY AND OBVIOUS EFFORT TO LIMIT PRESS VOCER-AGE OF ARRIVAL WOULD ONLY LEAD TO FURTHER MISINTERPRETATION. THERE MAY BE SOME ADVANTAGE, ON THE OTHER HAND, IN PUBLICLY RE-INFORCING LOW-KEY, EXPLORATORY NATURE OF VISIT. WE SUGGEST, THEREFORE, THAT YOU CONSIDER MAKING BRIEF ARRIVAL STATEMENT AT AIRPORT AND OFFERING PREDETERMINED RESPONSE TO ANY QUESTIONS. EMBASSY CONTINUES TO BELIEVE BRIEF DEPARTURE STATEMENT PREFER-ABLE TO PRESS CONFERENCE AND RECOMMENDS, IF POSSIBLE, AVOIDING ANY SITUATION IN WHICH PRESS CAN INTERROGATE. FOLLOWING ARE SUGGESTED ARRIVAL STATEMENT AND ALL-PURPOSE RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS.

4. SUGGESTED ARRIVAL STATEMENT. IT IS A PLEASURE TO BE BACK IN CYPRUS. I AM LOOKING FORWARD TO RENEWING ACQUAINTANCE WITH PRESIDENT KYPRIANOU, FOREIGN MINISTER ROLANDIS AND HIS EXCELL-ENCY MR. DENKTASH WHOM I HAVE MET BOTH HERE AND IN THE UNITED STATES. I SHOULD LIKE TO MAKE IT CLEAR THAT I'M NOT HERE TO MAKE PROPOSALS OR PRESENT A PLAN. THE PURPOSE OF THIS VISIT IS TO BETTER INFORM OURSELVES OF THE THINKING HERE IN LIGHT OF RECENT DEVELOPMENTS. THE POSITION OF THE UNITED STATES HAS NOT CHANGED: WE WANT TO HELP, IF WE CAN AND IF IT IS DESIRED BY CYPRUS, TO FIND A JUST AND LASTING SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 03 NICOSI 02228 310948Z

PROBLEM. WE FULLY SUPPORT THE EFFORTS OF UN SECRETARY GENERAL WALDHEIM, AND OUR DISCUSSIONS HERE WILL BE WITHIN THAT FRAME-
WORK. WE CONTINUE TO BELIEVE THAT THE BEST HOPE FOR FINDING A SOLUTION IS THROUGH NEGOTIATIONS UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE SECRETARY GENERAL.

5. IN ANSWER TO QUESTIONS. I AM HERE, AS I HAVE INDICATED, ONLY FOR THE PURPOSE OF MEETING WITH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, LEADERS OF THE TURKISH CYPRIOT COMMUNITY AND THE SECRETARY GENERAL'S SPECIAL REPRESENTATIVE IN ORDER TO LEARN IF THE UNITED STATES CAN BE HELPFUL. SINCE THIS IS THE NATURE OF MY VISIT, I CAN'T REALLY OFFER ANY FURTHER COMMENT EXCEPT TO REINTERATE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS READY, IF CYPRUS SO DESIRES, TO LEND ALL POSSIBLE SUPPORT TO FINDING A JUST AND LASTING SOLUTION TO THE CYPRUS PROBLEM.
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